

In other words the Chinese representatives signed their names to an agreement to release and repatriate all prisoners and subsequently their senior officers in Korea agreed that they would repatriate all captured personnel who wished to be repatriated, including those prisoners who had committed crimes before or after their capture.

It has been argued by the Soviet Representative at the General Committee on December 6 and indeed also today that the so-called Chinese Peoples Volunteers were not speaking for the Government of the Chinese Peoples Republic. He maintained that the Government of the Peoples Republic of China was not bound as a belligerent in the Korean war and was therefore not bound by the Korean Armistice Agreement. That argument has already been sufficiently demolished this afternoon. If it was put forward seriously, I can only say that the Foreign Minister of the Chinese Peoples Government does not seem to share the inhibitions of his friends here about assuming responsibility for the actions of the Chinese troops in Korea. On May 3 and again on June 5 at Geneva, Mr. Chou En Lai made proposals involving the withdrawal of foreign forces of both sides from the Korean Peninsula. Presumably speaking with the full responsibility of his office, he said that, in the event of agreement being reached, the Chinese Volunteers would withdraw from North Korea. Without any nonsense about China not being a belligerent in the Korean war, Mr. Chou En Lai said plainly on May 3 "the Korean and Chinese side made repeated efforts for the conclusion of an armistice in Korea, and finally reached agreement with the other side on the question of war prisoners. Both sides agreed to ensure for every prisoner of war the opportunity of exercising his right to be repatriated." If Mr. Chou En Lai did not assume responsibility on behalf of his Government for the actions and activities of the so-called Chinese Peoples Volunteers, then I do not know why he spoke like this at the Geneva Conference. Indeed, I do not know what he was doing there at all.

To try to escape responsibility in this way for applying to the eleven United States airmen and to others in a similar plight the appropriate provisions of the Korean Armistice Agreement seems to me, a transparent evasion of a straightforward and clear obligation. It is as if a man charged with having committed fraud were to plead that at the time of his crime he had been travelling under an assumed name.

But this is not a dry legal problem. It is not merely a violation of agreements solemnly undertaken which we are being asked to condemn in this item which we are proposing for inclusion in the agenda. This action is also a violation of our deepest humanitarian instincts. Eleven men of whom we now know, and no doubt others of whose fate we still remain in ignorance, have been imprisoned by the Chinese Communist authorities while serving in the forces of the United Nations Command and after an agreement which provided that they should be released, so we are bound here in this Assembly to